

National Dredging Team



CHARTER

VISION

Dredging of U.S. harbors and channels is conducted in a timely and cost effective manner while meeting environmental protection/restoration/enhancement goals.

GOALS

The National Dredging Team will facilitate communication, coordination, and resolution of dredging issues among the participating Federal agencies, and will serve as a forum for promoting the implementation of the National Dredging Policy and the recommendations in the National Dredging Team's Dredged Material Management: Action Agenda for the Next Decade (2003) (Action Agenda).

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITIES

The following laws are the primary Federal statutes governing dredging and dredged material disposal. They provide the agencies represented on the National Dredging Team with the authority to carry out their responsibilities for dredging and related activities.

- Federal Water Pollution Control (Clean Water) Act
- Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act
- Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899
- Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act
- Endangered Species Act
- Coastal Zone Management Act
- Merchant Marine Act
- National Environmental Policy Act
- Water Resources Development Acts
- Magnuson-Stevens Act
- Marine Mammal Protection Act

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

The National Dredging Team embraces and will operate under the National Dredging Policy as outlined in the Action Agenda, referenced above. Fundamental to this Policy is the recognition that a network of ports and harbors is essential to the U.S. economy and national security, and that the nation's coastal, ocean, and freshwater resources are critical assets, which must be protected, conserved, and restored.

The National Dredging Team will function as a forum for information exchange, issue identification, and timely resolution of issues affecting dredging programs.

The National Dredging Team will serve as the principal operating organization within the Marine Transportation System with respect to dredging issues.

The National Dredging Team will review policies and issues that are national in scope; regional and local issues will be addressed by the Regional Dredging Teams and the Local Planning/Project Groups.

Regional Dredging Teams may elevate dredging issues to the National Dredging Team for resolution, in accordance with the Guidance to Regional Dredging Teams; however, the National Dredging Team is committed to resolution of issues at the lowest authorized management level. Regional Dredging Teams are expected to utilize all available means to resolve issues prior to elevating an issue to the National Dredging Team (e.g., an issue involving the assessment of environmental impacts of a proposed dredging project should be addressed at the local/regional level).

The National Dredging Team is committed to completion and timely implementation of the Action Agenda's recommendations.

The agenda and issues to be addressed by the National Dredging Team will be determined by the National Dredging Team based upon recommendations from National Dredging Team members, from Regional Dredging Teams, and from stakeholders.

Information will be sought from stakeholders to help clarify specific issues as well as provide factual data on the issues.

Participation on the National Dredging Team will not supersede or otherwise affect any authority of the participating agencies.

MEMBERSHIP

The National Dredging Team shall consist of representatives from the following Federal agencies: Department of Defense/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Ocean Service and National Marine Fisheries

Service, Department of Transportation/U.S. Maritime Administration, Department of Interior/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Department of Homeland Security/U.S. Coast Guard. Other Federal agencies, such as the U.S. Geological Service and the U.S. Navy, may also participate.

The National Dredging Team shall be co-chaired by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The National Dredging Team will be guided by a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will be composed of senior level executives appointed by the department/agency head; Steering Committee members should have the authority to make binding policy decisions and commitments for their respective agencies.

The National Dredging Team will be composed of agency managers and decision-makers, and technical experts. Each agency shall designate in writing the names of a member and an alternate to represent their agency on the National Dredging Team. Because the USACE and EPA are Co-Chairs with a very extensive agenda, these two agencies may have two members and one alternate each on this Committee.

Members of the National Dredging Team shall keep their senior Agency management and, in particular, their National Dredging Team Steering Committee member informed of activities, actions, and issue deliberations/resolution.

OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the National Dredging Team is to serve as a forum for issue identification and resolution, implementation of the Action Agenda's recommendations, and communication/coordination with Regional Dredging Teams, as well as other stakeholders.

Specific objectives of the National Dredging Team as detailed in the Action Agenda include:

- Promotion of the beneficial use of dredged material.
- Promotion of overall sediment management approaches, particularly at the watershed level.
- Identification and resolution of emerging issues.
- Support to Regional Dredging Teams and to Local Planning/Project Groups.

Twenty-two specific actions to be undertaken are included in the Action Agenda.

Other actions by the National Dredging Team include:

- Develop annual work plans including identification of specific issues, needed guidance, and other actions to promote efficient dredging of channels and harbors while meeting environmental protection and enhancement goals.

- Identify and invite stakeholders, including the nation's ports and environmental interest groups, to provide information and data to the National Dredging Team that would help clarify the factual basis for deliberations on specific issues.
- Conduct meetings with Regional Dredging Teams as necessary to promote information exchange and to support continuing efforts with Local Planning/Project Groups to manage dredged material in a watershed context.
- Sponsor periodic forums of dredging stakeholders with the National Dredging Team to provide an opportunity to hear the concerns of stakeholders, to exchange information, and to facilitate a continuing dialogue on dredging issues.
- Coordinate closely with other initiatives.
- Prepare a communications plan to provide periodic updates to stakeholders and the Regional Dredging Teams on the actions and plans of the National Dredging Team.

PROCEDURES

Meetings are to be co-chaired by representatives of USACE and EPA.

Meetings of the Steering Committee will be held on an "as needed" basis and will be held as requested by the Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee or the National Dredging Team.

Regular meetings of the National Dredging Team will be scheduled by the Co-Chairs. Special sessions can be requested by members and scheduled by the Co-Chairs as needed.

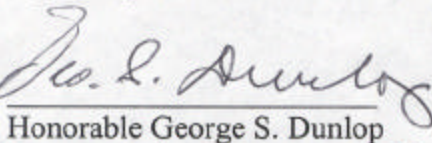
The National Dredging Team will elevate issues to the Steering Committee for decisions or policy guidance, as needed. In addition, other actions by the National Dredging Team, such as the annual work plans, will be provided to the Steering Committee for information and approval, as needed.

AGREEMENT

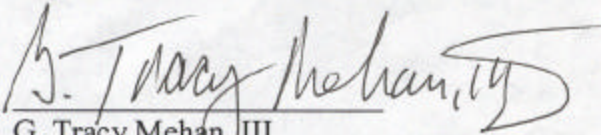
Members of the National Dredging Team agree to fully participate in the Team activities and will operate under this Charter. Participation is subject to agency budget constraints. This charter is not intended to commit members to specific funding levels.

This charter shall be effective upon the date of signature. Agencies can terminate their participation at any time by notifying the other parties 60 days in advance of the termination.

Signed by:



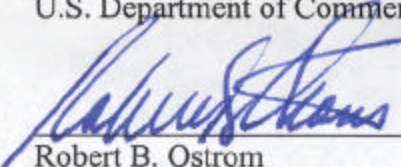
Honorable George S. Dunlop
Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Policy and Legislation)
U.S. Department of the Army
Co-Chair



G. Tracy Mehan, III
Assistant Administrator
Office of Water
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
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Timothy R.E. Keeney
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
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Robert B. Ostrom
Chief Counsel
Maritime Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation



Steve Williams
Director
Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Department of Interior



RADM Thomas H. Gilmour
Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety, Security, & Environmental Protection
U.S. Coast Guard
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

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